

[Mr. Steingart]

Beliefs & Customs - Folk Stuff

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK Forms to be Filled out for Each Interview

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Emanuel Verschleiser

ADDRESS 1419 Jesup Ave., Bronx

DATE December 8, 1938

SUBJECT "Folksay" - Mr. Steingart

1. Date and time of interview December 6, 1938
2. Place of interview Crusader Cafeteria, 14th Street, NYC
3. Name and address of informant
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant.
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you
6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

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NEW YORK

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Emanuel Verschleiser

ADDRESS 1419 Jesup Avenue, Bronx

DATE December 8, 1958

SUBJECT "FOLKSAY" - Mr. Steingart

A MILLINERY OPERATOR TALKS ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE TRADE (translated from Yiddish)

The trade is shot to pieces now... Before you sat down to work from March till Christmas... But now the season sometimes doesn't last six weeks... With all the changes in style and competition they're afraid to work for stock... They got an order, they make it... They work for orders... They wouldn't even work for big orders, they're afraid it'll be cancelled... My shop wouldn't take an order from Macy even... There wouldn't be anything in it... They'd be afraid he'll cancel it in the middle... I don't like to work in the big shop, nobody knows you... You are not a man... You are a number. 421. You are not Mr. Steingart... You are 421. It's good I am not married... I mould have to be on relief long ago... Today I waited all day in the shop, got an hour and a half work... It's bad...

ANECDOTES (heard in "Crusader" Cafeteria, 14th Street)

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Of course you heard about Dr. Natanson, the philosopher. His wife asks him one time at a late hour why doesn't he go to bed. " And who will think of God and free will? "

Once he was asked by an organization to lecture, "Please," they asked, "give us this time a lecture about some light subject."

"Well, he answers, "how about Kants' categorical imperative? No, too hard." He thinks and thinks. "All right. How is this: The Substratum of the Nirvana in relation to Life?"

Trotsky was sitting at a rivershore in Mexico, fishing. A peasant approached him: "Say, are you a Russian?" he asks. "You look like a Russian."

"Yes," says Trotsky.

"Well," says the peasant, "I heard that Stalin died..."

"Go away, you fool," Trotsky answered. "If Stalin had died I wouldn't be sitting here."

Then the peasant says, "But it's true that Lenin died."

"Yes," Trotsky answered, "if he wouldn't be dead he would be here with me..."
